

Transformation of public library websites in Indonesia

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Transformation of public library websites in Indonesia

Nove E. Variant Anna

Introduction

Priorities for the purpose of global development that are carried out by the United Nations through United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2015, 2018) are eliminating poverty and bridging the gaps in society by 2030. A place that can accommodate all heterogeneous societies is a public library. The change of the library from a place to share information into a place to create knowledge requires the library to not only provide collections for readers but also manage how these collections can be used to produce new knowledge for community empowerment. Critical to this are digital collections, changes in ownership and access rights and change the library website into a one-stop shopping portal, where users can get the information but also can share their knowledges to other users. Besides, for changing the library in physical ways, there are financial challenges (Michnik, 2015).

How is the condition of the public library nowadays? A public library still has to focus more on the provision of space for its printed collection such as books, magazines and newspapers. The library also provides space for the community, reading service and some digital collections. Unfortunately, most public library websites are static and only give one-way information to users. In many cases, the website only includes the library catalog without any reference to any kind of digital service.

According to an International Federation of Library Associations IFLA (2018) manifesto:

A digital library is an online collection of digital objects, of assured quality, that are created or collected and managed according to internationally accepted principles for collection development

and made accessible in a coherent and sustainable manner, supported by services necessary to allow users to retrieve and exploit the resources.

Instead, a more dynamic portal is a specially designed website that provides information from various sources such as search engines, e-mail and forums; each source usually has its own page, and the users can choose which information they want to be showed (Wikipedia, 2018).

Nowadays, many public libraries, particularly in developing countries, are still focusing on the physical location, but some libraries have begun to transform into useful libraries for their users; however, they still have limited physical access, whereas libraries should have broader vision and give the real impact for the society (Agosto, 2016). An important role of the public library is to build human capital so they can have the competitive and literate knowledge and meet the global demands where creativity and innovation are the main keys of success. Today, a public library should transform from providing information on the static website to a knowledge portal.

Data and information were gathered from 34 public library websites in Indonesia in early August 2017. The survey focused on:

- the availability of online digital collections;
- the availability of digital services such as the chat reference;
- the availability of trusted external information sources; and
- the availability of user forums for discussion.

Findings

Based on the survey of library websites in Indonesia, following results

are obtained. In total, 55 per cent or 19 public libraries do not have any website. Of the libraries that have a website, 26 per cent already have an OPAC although that only contain the collection description, and only 6 per cent or 1 library has a digital collection. None of these libraries have services such as chat reference, external information services and user forums. Most public library websites do include a profile about the library, types of services offered, collections owned, operational hours, organizational structure and events and news that are related to the library.

As in many other developing countries, public library services in Indonesia have not yet closed to the realm of digital library where people can access the collections and services online. Refer the following library websites for examples (Figures 1-4).

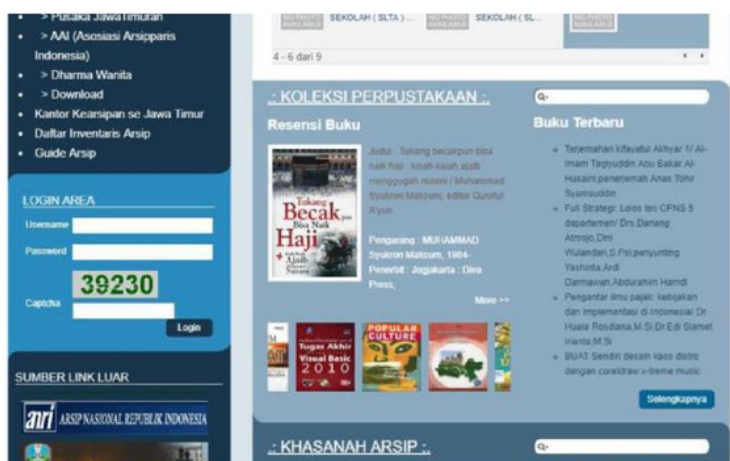
Portals of knowledge

A knowledge portal is a place where knowledge and innovation are created and one in which, there is a need for more than a static website as the ones that are run by most libraries now. The features that should exist in the portal are ability to facilitate knowledge acquisition/creation process, information storage, distribution of knowledge, knowledge application. Through this portal, the users are able to obtain information/knowledge from many sources such as e-books, internet, online learning and input and interactions from other users. The users are also able to access knowledge and information selectively and based on what they need. The library also has to facilitate the creation of knowledge and access to local knowledge (Chowdhury et al., 2006). The library should ask for and review users' feedback.

Figure 1. Front page of Dispersip Jatim website



Figure 2. Dispersip Jatim library collection



E-resources: a strong commitment is needed in transforming a library website into a knowledge portal to create a place that may encourage knowledge acquisition and creativity. Public libraries have to change the public's mindset regarding a library in which the collection is limited to only printed books. Also the management of electronic information sources is necessary so that they may be accessed online anytime and anywhere. However, unless it is an open access, e-books may have copyright and access

rights restrictions (Colomb *et al.*, 2012). Apart from issues relating to access, Indonesia has need to published many e-books (Putera, 2011) (Figure 5).

User needs: considering that the investment for electronic collections are expensive, the library has to be very careful in building digital collections. In this matter, the ability to target the needs of users will be significant. The strategy is similar to companies that want to sell their product; they conduct a market

analysis to get the precise knowledge of what the market wants, and likewise, libraries need to be understand of the user community's needs. The libraries also have to be able to target mobile technology. In all, the libraries should better change the mindset of the public about a library from building with books into a dynamic learning place (Lee, 2016) (Figure 6).

Cooperation: there is no library whose collection is the most complete, cooperation with various parties is definitely needed. To support the knowledge portal, libraries may cooperate with internet providers and IT to sponsor internet services and IT infrastructures. Cooperating with universities may also be a good alternative, as it can provide expertise while building the portal. Cooperation with other public libraries, with the government, with publishers and many others will also contribute much to the portal.

Internet resources: are imperative for libraries that are short on budget while buying access rights for electronic collections. Librarians may make use of the information available on the internet by doing collection evaluation from internet sources to include in the OPAC of the library collection and many freely available open access books and courseware. The information taken from internet resources is very useful; however, the librarians need to consider various things before including the information into the library collection (Weber, 1999) and select only authoritative information to avoid misleading the users (Pitchmann, 2001) (Figure 7).

Integrated OPAC: is one of the keystones in the success of a knowledge portal in providing various kinds of information for users. Integrated OPACs including other public libraries, national libraries, Worldcat, and internet sources should be considered to provide one-stop information sources for users to obtain a great variety of resources and services (Figure 8).

Collaboration: A knowledge portal has to facilitate collaboration between users and other users and between users and librarians. Collaboration can be

Figure 3. Online application of East Kalimantan Province Library

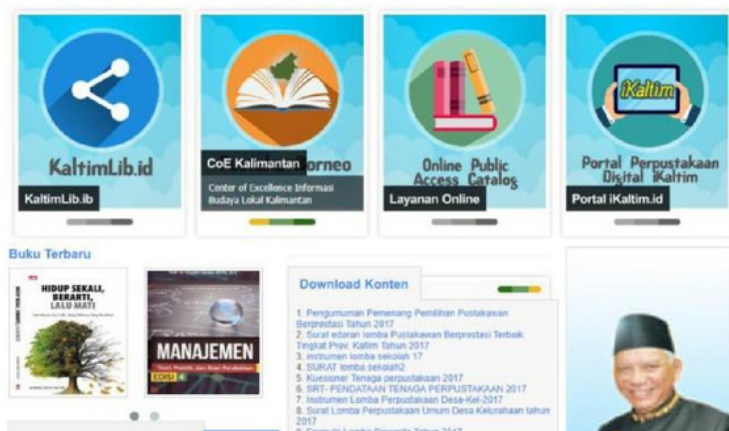


Figure 4. iKaltim Mobile Application



Figure 5. Video and podcast collection from NYPL (2018)



Figure 6. Knowledge Portal Framework



done by using Web 2.0 such as integrating social media within the portal and enable users to create virtual spaces such as discussion forums to accommodate discussions within the community and well beyond.

Conclusion

Innovation is made when a person has easy access to knowledge, where knowledge enables them to get inspired and transform into an asset for new inventions. However, in many developing countries such as Indonesia, there are not many institutions that provide trustworthy information. Instead, there is a gap between information sources and understanding of technologies which becomes an obstacle in information access and innovation.

Suggestions

- National libraries should support and encourage public libraries to become digitally active.
- Public libraries must identify user needs and engage with the community to access information using any mobile device.
- Ways to provide readiness for public library to support and provide digital services may need to be studied further.

Figure 7. Digital collection from NYPL (2018)

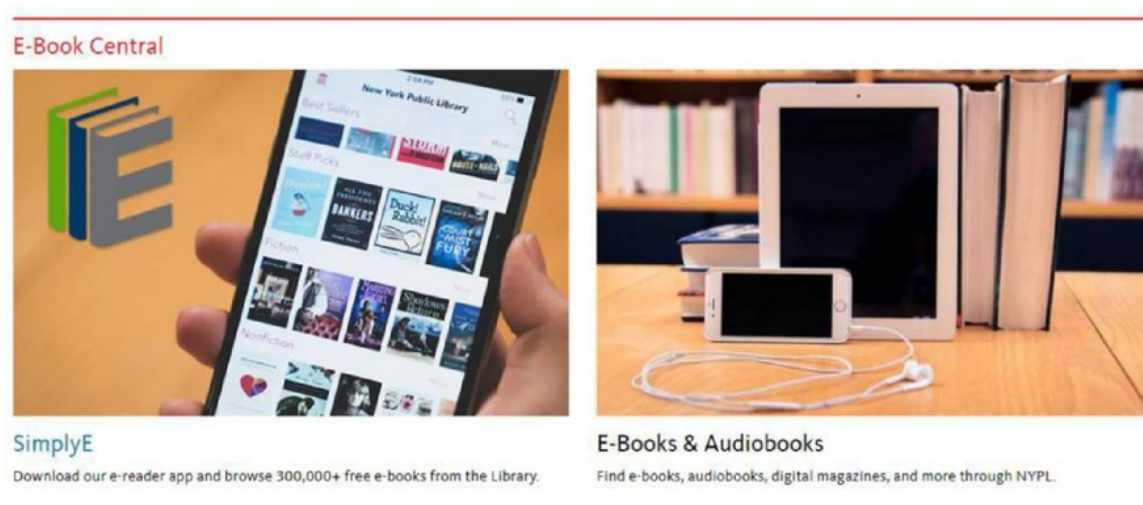
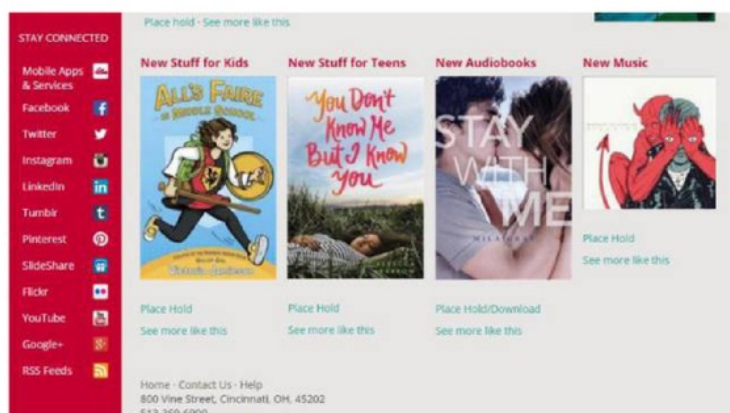


Figure 8. Using Web 2.0 for collaboration in The Library of Cincinnati



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